

What Satan Doesn't Want Me To Know, Part 3 - Romans 6:18-23 – January 29th, 2012

- Today's teaching is part three of a series titled; "What Satan Doesn't Want Me To Know." This study brings us to the conclusion of Romans six.
- Now, it's important that I preface today's sermon by letting you know that the text will deal with some mature subject matter, and is rated PG13.
- The reason being is, the Apostle Paul, by the Holy Spirit, has to tackle some touchy topics in order to teach the doctrine of living under grace.

- Now, for those of you who have been with us for part one and two of this series, you'll be delighted to know that I'm not going to review v12-17.
- However, for the benefit of those who have not been with us from the beginning of this series, you will need to know a little bit of the back story.
- Up to this point, Paul has had to go to great lengths in establishing a contrast between living under the law, as opposed to living under grace.

- The problem is, Satan knows that it's the deciding factor as to whether or not he is successful or not in his desire to destroy us and devour us.
- He'll do anything, and stop at nothing, to keep us from knowing that, under grace, I no longer have to acquiesce to his commands and demands.
- Conversely, he knows that if he can keep us under the law and out from under grace, we will continue to be slaves to sin when we don't have to.

- So, with that understanding, we are now ready for part three, which I have organized into three parts beginning with our first on in verses 18-19.

1. I don't have to live a life of impurity (Verses 18-19)

(18) You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness. (19) I put this in human terms because you are weak in your natural selves. Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness.

- v18 Paul reiterates how that, thankfully, we have been set free from the slavery to sin, and instead have now become slaves to righteousness.
- v19 He says he's put it in human terms because of their weakness, and now they're to offer their bodies to righteousness as they had to impurity.
- If you were to ask me what I thought one of the most successful campaigns of the enemy was, it would have to be the lie that purity is too hard.

- I would suggest that while it may be very hard to live a life of purity in these last days, it's even harder to live a life of impurity in these last days.
- The reason I say that is because of the utter ruthlessness of Satan when it comes to this specific area of impurity in our Christian lives.
- He knows that the only thing harder than living a pure life is living an impure life, because the path of the sinner, especially in impurity, is hard.

Proverbs 13:15 NKJV Good understanding gains favor, But the way of the unfaithful *is* hard.

- It's for this reason that the Apostle Paul gives the exhortation to "offer the parts of our body as slaves to righteousness instead of to impurity.
- If it sounds like Paul's repeating himself when he talks about body parts, it's because Paul is repeating himself when he talks about body parts.
- You'll forgive me if that came across as being facetious, however, the seriousness of sexual impurity cannot and should not be underestimated.

1 Corinthians 6:18 NKJV (18) Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.

- If the truth be known, there are a number of reasons the scriptures are replete with verses like 1 Corinthians 6:18 dealing with sexual immorality.
- Chief amongst them being, as Paul writes, we are sinning against our own body, in the sense that we are offering to be its slave with our body.
- This explains why it is, how it is, that the area of sexual purity has become the greatest of all battlegrounds in the life of a committed Christian.

Roy Hession of this writes; "Be assured, sex in one form or another is everybody's battle, whether male or female, whether non-Christian or true believer. What is one of God's most beautiful gifts to man – and when rightly used, one of the sources of his greatest happiness – has become one of his greatest battlegrounds with evil. Perhaps this is due to the fact that whereas all man's faculties have been affected by the Fall the sex instinct seems to have become more corrupted by that Fall than any other of his instincts – shown by the fact that the erotic side of our natures responds more readily to evil suggestion than to good. For instance, the story in the newspapers of some illicit sex happening tends to spark off something wrong in us, that the story of another person's happy married life does not. It is undeniable that there is much more public interest in wrong sex than in right sex. And this is our battle even as Christians, no matter how long we have known the Lord. And if we do not know God's way of victory here, we do not know it anywhere. The level of our general Christian lives is not likely to rise any higher than the level of our sex life."

2. I don't have to live a life of shame (Verses 20-21)

(20) When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. (21) What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death!

- v20 Paul reminds them how that when they were slaves to sin, they were also, in effect, free from the control that righteousness would have had.
- v21 He then asks them how this had benefited them other than reaping things that they are even now ashamed of, which would result in death.
- In other words, the only benefit of offering our bodies as slaves to sexual sin is a life of shame, and to make matters worse it could end in death.

- Notice how Paul says that when we are slaves to sin, we're free from the control of righteousness. What does this mean, and how does it apply?
- Here's a thought; when I'm out of control in sin, then so too am I out of the control righteousness, which doesn't have permission to intervene.
- I'm free from righteousness interrupting my wickedness because I'm under the control of the latter, which further enslaves me and shames me.

I like how one said it when they wrote how: "...there was a kind of freedom under slavery to sin, we were 'free with regard to righteousness.' Righteousness exercised no control over us. That freedom is enticing and we are tempted to return to it. But we are ashamed of those things because we know in our hearts they 'result in death.' Death is the proper penalty for that slavery, and our sense of shame shows we know it. Even if we twist our consciences to persuade ourselves that these behaviors are alright, if they come into the open we will blush. Sin leads to both guilt and shame."

3. I don't have to die and go to hell (Verses 22-23)

(22) But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. (23) For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- v22 He says now that you've been set free from sin and are a slave to God, the benefit reaped leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.
- v23 Paul now seals the deal in this often quoted verse saying, the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- If you're wondering why I chose to couch this in terms of knowing that I don't have to die and go to hell, it's because this bluntness is a must.

- If Satan can deceive us to believe that there's no hell or a loving God would certainly never send anyone to hell, he renders the gospel gutless.
- Perhaps better said, Satan doesn't want us to know this because in so doing he defangs the gospel so that it is no longer capable of biting us.
- The fact of the matter is, that if the biting bad news of eternal death is unknown, then so too is the exciting good news of eternal life unknown.

A couple of years ago, I happened upon a very old book from back in 1912, which I purchased for .25 cents from the Kailua Library used bookstore. The title of this treasured classic will explain it's devalued price, for it is simply this; "One Thousand Thoughts for Funeral Occasions." This particular book has become to me a priceless reference, and one for which I find myself unable to stop reading on many an occasion. Lest you think I have developed a fascination for the morbid, let me hasten to say that it contains, in the words of it's introduction; "some of the most helpful ideas saved from oblivion, and some of the best messages preserved for further use. ...The seeds of blessing contained in this book have been transferred from the shade and rocks to the barren fields and planted where they are needed, and where they will find favorable environment to develop into the largest fruitage." I found one such seed in the volume of this book and I would like to share it with you at this time because it's so apropos. It goes like this; "After a forest fire has raged furiously, it has been found that many pine-cones have had their seeds released by the heat, which ordinarily would have remained unsown. The future forest sprang from the ashes of the former. Some Christian graces, such as this, have been evolved from such fiery truths. The furnace has been used to make fruitful."

- I share that to say this; sometimes we need to feel the heat of the raging fires of hell. If we don't then there's no releasing the seeds of heaven.
- I'll say the same thing in a different way; absent the fire and brimstone truth about eternal death in hell I've no interest in eternal life in heaven.
- That's why Satan doesn't want me to know this. Even if seeds of heaven are released by the fiery heat, he still comes to take it away from us.

Mark 4:2-20 NIV He taught them many things by parables, and in his teaching said: (3) "Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. (4) As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. (5) Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. (6) But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. (7) Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. (8) Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, multiplying thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times." (9) Then Jesus said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." (10) When he was alone, the Twelve and the others around him asked him about the parables. (11) He told them, "The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables (12) so that, "they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!" (13) Then Jesus said to them, "Don't you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable? (14) The farmer sows the word. (15) Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them. (16) Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy. (17) But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. (18) Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; (19) but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful. (20) Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop—thirty, sixty or even a hundred times what was sown."